

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL COAST REGION**

STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 9-11, 2020

Prepared on November 17, 2020

ITEM NUMBER: 12

SUBJECT: Order No. R3-2020-0100 – Termination of Individual Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. R3-2003-0008 for the City of Salinas Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility, Monterey County

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KEY INFORMATION

Location: City of Salinas Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility, Davis Road at River Crossing, Salinas, Monterey County

Type of Discharge: Fruit and Vegetable Processing Wastewater, occasional stormwater

Design Capacity: 4.0 million gallons per day (MGD), average monthly; 6.8 MGD, maximum daily

Treatment: Screening, 13-acre facultative aeration lagoon

Disposal: Three oxidation/percolation ponds, additional disposal during high inflow season is provided by drying beds

Reclamation: Treated wastewater can be diverted from ponds to Monterey One Water's Regional Treatment Plant in Marina, California for offsite recycling

Existing Order: Individual Order No. R3-2003-0008

ACTION: Adoption of Order No. R3-2020-0100 Terminating Individual Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. R3-2003-0008

SUMMARY

Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Coast Water Board) staff recommends the termination of Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. R3-2003-0008 for the City of Salinas Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility. This Order authorizes the City of Salinas to collect, treat, and dispose of industrial wastewater from fruit and vegetable packing plants in a service area on the southern end of the City of Salinas. Order No. R3-2003-0008 is no longer necessary as Central Coast Water Board staff enrolled the Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility into General Waste

Discharge Requirements Order No. R3-2004-0066 for Discharges of Fruit and Vegetable Processing Waste (General Permit) on November 17, 2020. The General Permit includes almost identical requirements as the individual permit and is as protective of water quality and public health.

DISCUSSION

Background

The City of Salinas' Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility collects and treats wastewater from about 25 fruit and vegetable processing and packaging facilities with a combined average flow of about two million gallons per day.

The Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility treats wastewater with a 13-acre aeration pond and three oxidation/disposal ponds. Once treated, the wastewater is disposed by percolation and evaporation in three storage/disposal ponds. The City of Salinas has made significant upgrades to the Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility over the last two years and now diverts a portion of the treated wastewater from their storage/disposal ponds to Monterey One Water's Regional Treatment Plant in Marina for additional treatment and recycling of the wastewater. Additionally, the City of Salinas is completing the construction of a stormwater diversion structure that will collect, treat, and discharge urban stormwater runoff from the southern area of Salinas to the Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility. A portion of the industrial wastewater and treated stormwater will percolate and evaporate in the storage/disposal ponds but in the dry season when demand for agricultural supply water is high, a portion will be pumped to Monterey One Water for additional treatment and recycling. The diversion of wastewater to Monterey One Water reduces industrial wastewater disposal onsite and increases recycling of wastewater in the Salinas valley.

These upgrades also made it necessary to update waste discharge requirements, and upon review of the information provided in the City of Salinas' report of waste discharge, Central Coast Water Board staff determined that the wastewater and stormwater discharged from the Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility meets the conditions of the General Permit. Therefore, on November 17, 2020, the Central Coast Water Board Executive Officer enrolled the City of Salinas into the General Permit and enrollment in the General Permit authorizes the City of Salinas to collect, treat, and dispose of both industrial wastewater and stormwater.

Compliance History

The City of Salinas has been in compliance with the requirements of the existing individual permit, and historically has reported only minor violations. Over the past three years, the City of Salinas exceeded the daily pH limit of 8.5 for 6 days, and exceeded the nitrate drinking water standard in one shallow groundwater monitoring well. The City of Salinas concludes that the nitrate is likely elevated because of neighboring impacts from agricultural practices. Central Coast Water Board staff concur that nitrate impacts are likely due to agricultural practices because of the lower detections of nitrate in the

effluent (or discharge) and the presence of elevated nitrogen in groundwater in the surrounding area. Staff will continue to monitor and evaluate compliance with the requirements of the General Permit and the associated Monitoring and Reporting Program to ensure the discharge is protective of water quality.

Climate Change

The Central Coast faces the threat and the effects of climate change for the foreseeable and distant future. To proactively prepare and respond, Central Coast Water Board staff has launched the Central Coast Water Board's Climate Action Initiative, which identifies how our work relates to climate change and prioritizes actions that promote adaptation and mitigation to improve resilience and protect beneficial uses.

Termination of the individual permit and enrollment in the General Permit allows for increased stormwater treatment and capture of urban stormwater runoff reducing discharge of first flush stormwater to the Salinas River. The upgrades the City of Salinas has completed will result in increased water recycling efforts for the Salinas valley, which has positive climate change benefits.

CONCLUSION

The City of Salinas' upgrades to the Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility provide a water quality benefit by increasing recycling in the Salinas valley and capturing and treating urban stormwater that otherwise would be discharged directly to the Salinas River. Central Coast Water Board Executive Officer enrolled the City of Salinas into the General Permit and termination of the individual Order No. R3-2003-0008 via approval of attached Order No. R3-2020-0100 will begin regulation of the discharge via the General Permit. The General Permit includes almost identical requirements as the individual permit and is as protective of water quality. Furthermore, enrolling the City of Salinas into the General Permit is consistent with the Waste Discharge Requirements program goals to reduce the number of individual permits and enroll dischargers in General Permits to improve program efficiency and regulate similar discharges consistently.

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt Order No. R3-2020-0100 for the termination of individual Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. R3-2003-0008 for the City of Salinas Industrial Wastewater Treatment Plant.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed Order No. R3-2020-0100

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